

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 172507

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM GENEVA DATED JULY 7, 1978 SENT
SECSTATE WASHDC IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 09821

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MAYNES FROM AMBASSADOR VANDEN
HEUVEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AORG, WMO
SUBJECT: SELECTION OF SECRETARY GENERAL OF WMO

1. FOLLOWING IS THE PROPOSED TEXT OF A LETTER THAT I
WOULD LIKE TO SEND TO THE AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE REGARDING
THE SELECTION OF THE NEXT SECRETARY GENERAL OF WMO. I
HAVE DISCUSSED THIS TEXT PERSONALLY AND CONFIDENTIALLY
WITH AMBASSADOR HESSEL WHO WOULD WELCOME THE RECEIPT OF
SUCH A LETTER AS A MEANS OF COMMITTING HIS GOVERNMENT TO
A STRONG SUPPORTIVE POSITION BEHIND DR. WHITE'S POTENTIAL
CANDIDACY. BY SENDING THIS LETTER NOW, WE WILL HAVE
SERVED INDIRECT NOTICE ON SECRETARY GENERAL DAVIES THAT
HIS REDESIGNATION IS NOT ALTOGETHER SECURE. I BELIEVE
THAT IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN LINING UP THE PRINCIPAL
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WESTERN NATIONS BEHIND THE POTENTIAL CANDIDACY OF DR.
WHITE THAT SEVERAL OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES MIGHT THEN
APPROACH DAVIES TO URGE HIM TO RE-CONSIDER HIS CANDIDACY.
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE HAVE LITTLE TO LOSE BY MAKING IT
CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL NOT BE SILENT
IF THE UNACCEPTABLE ATTITUDES THAT WERE REFLECTED AT HIGH
LEVELS DURING THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SESSIONS ARE CON-

TINUED IN THE PLENARY MEETINGS IN 1979.

2. QUOTE VARIOUS EVENTS DURING THE RECENTLY COMPLETED SESSION OF THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAVE LEFT MY GOVERNMENT WITH A DEEP SENSE OF CONCERN REGARDING THE DIRECTION OF THAT IMPORTANT AGENCY. SOME BASIC QUESTIONS REGARDING THE LEADERSHIP OF WMO ARE NOW LEFT FOR US TO CONSIDER. WE HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT NOT ONLY OF THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE ORGANIZATION BUT ALSO OF THOSE WHO HAVE ADMIRERED AND ENCOURAGED THE LEADERSHIP OF ITS SECRETARY GENERAL. WHEN DR. DAVIES INFORMED US SOME MONTHS AGO HE WOULD NOT BE A CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED HIMSELF, WE HOPED THAT THE HIGHEST HONORS AND AND AN EMERITUS POSITION OF CONTINUING INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE RESERVED FOR HIM SO THAT HIS SUCCESSOR WOULD HAVE THE BENEFIT OF HIS 24 YEARS OF EXECUTIVE EXPERIENCE. WE WERE PLEASED TO SUGGEST THE NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT WHITE, A GREAT ADMIRER OF DR. DAVIES (AND A PROFESSIONAL WHO IS ALSO GREATLY ADMIRERED BY DR. DAVIES) TO BE AVAILABLE AS A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR. HE WOULD ONLY DO SO ON THE CONDITION THAT DR. DAVIES HIMSELF WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR ANOTHER TERM. IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT DR. DAVIES WOULD ONLY RECONSIDER HIS POSITION IN REFUSING TO STAND FOR RE-ELECTION IF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WMO URGED SUCH A DECISION AND RECOMMENDED HIS RE-ELECTION TO THE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS. DESPITE THE ABUSIVE INTERVENTION OF THE
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PRESIDENT OF THE WMO IN TRYING TO PRESSURE AND FORCE SUCH A RESOLUTION OF ENDORSEMENT THE EXECUTIVE BOARD REFUSED TO DO SO.

3. QUOTE ACCORDING TO THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SESSION THERE ARE CLEAR SIGNS THAT IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE. CERTAINLY THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAS SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EVENTS DURING THE EXECUTIVE SESSION SO THAT DISTURBED ITS MEMBERS. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT HE FEELS THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CAN BE DISREGARDED. THERE ARE SIGNS OF AN ALOOFNESS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND HIS STAFF WHICH ARE CERTAINLY DISCONCERTING.

4. QUOTE IT SEEMS TO US THAT IT IS NOT INAPPROPRIATE TO CONFRONT THIS PROBLEM DIRECTLY. IF THERE IS RESISTANCE TO DR. DAVIES' RE-ELECTION FOR A FURTHER FOUR YEARS (THROUGH 1983) WE BELIEVE THAT HIS LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION WOULD NOT PERMIT HIS PERSONAL DESIRES AT THIS POINT TO BECLOUD BOTH HIS ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE FUTURE OF THE WMO. KNOWING HOW DIFFICULT THESE QUESTIONS ARE, AND AT THE SAME TIME HOW IMPORTANT THEY ARE, I ADDRESS THIS INQUIRY TO YOU TO SEEK YOUR ADVICE AND GUIDANCE. IF YOUR

GOVERNMENT SHARES THE CONCERNS EXPRESSED IN THIS LETTER,
PERHAPS IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO CONSIDER TOGETHER WHAT
STEPS MIGHT BE TAKEN. UNQUOTE

5. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR DISCUSSING
WITH DR. GEORGE BENTON, NOAA, AND MEMBER OF THE WMO
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE DESIRABILITY OF SENDING TO AM-
BASSADOR HESSEL THE ABOVE LETTER. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL
TO RECEIVE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS. VANDEN HEUVEL UNQUOTE
VANCE

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